

Urban Remote Sensing

Monitoring, Synthesis and Modeling in the Urban Environment

Editor: Xiaojun Yang



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Urban Environment

Xiaojun Yang

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*This book is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Chor-Pang (C.P.) Lo (1939–2007),
whose creative and groundbreaking work in urban remote sensing inspires
a new generation of scholars working for a better understanding
of the complex, dynamic urban environment.*

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LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Bruno Aiazzi

Institute of Applied Physics “Nello Carrara”
CNR Research Area of Florence
10 Via Madonna del Piano, 50019 Sesto F.no (FI), Italy
E-mail: b.aiazzi@ifac.cnr.it

Stefano Baronti

Institute of Applied Physics “Nello Carrara”
CNR Research Area of Florence
10 Via Madonna del Piano, 50019 Sesto F.no (FI), Italy
E-mail: s.baronti@ifac.cnr.it

Okke Batelaan

Department of Hydrology and Hydraulic Engineering
Vrije Universiteit Brussel
Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels, Belgium
E-mail: okke.batelaan@vub.ac.be

Kimberly E. Baugh

Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental
Sciences
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado 80309, USA
E-mail: kim.baugh@noaa.gov

Budhendra Bhaduri

Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831, USA
E-mail: bhaduribl@ornl.gov

Mathias Bochow

Helmholtz Centre Potsdam – GFZ
German Research Centre for Geosciences
Section 1.4 Remote Sensing
Telegrafenberg, 14473 Potsdam, Germany
E-mail: mathias.bochow@gfz-potsdam.de

Frank Canters

Cartography and GIS Research Unit
Department of Geography
Vrije Universiteit Brussel
Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels, Belgium
E-mail: fcanters@vub.ac.be

Luca Capobianco

Department of Information Engineering
University of Siena
Via Roma 56, 53100 Siena, Italy
E-mail: capobianco@dii.unisi.it

Jose-Silvan Cardenas

Department of Geography
University at Buffalo, State University of New York
Buffalo, NY 14261, USA
E-mail: jlsilvan@buffalo.edu

Jarosław Chormański

Department of Hydraulic Structures and Environmental
Restoration
Warsaw University of Life Sciences
ul. Nowoursynowska 159, 02–776 Warsaw, Poland
E-mail: j.chormanski@levis.sggw.pl

Fabio Dell’Acqua

Department of Electronics
University of Pavia, via Ferrata 1
27100 Pavia, Italy
E-mail: fabio.dellacqua@unipv.it

Christopher D. Elvidge

Earth Observation Group
NOAA National Geophysical Data Center
Boulder, Colorado 80303, USA
E-mail: chris.elvidge@noaa.gov

Edward H. Erwin

NOAA National Geophysical Data Center
Boulder, Colorado 80303, USA
E-mail: Edward.H.Erwin@noaa.gov

Amnon Frenkel

Center for Urban and Regional Studies
Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning
Technion – Israel Institute of Technology
Haifa 32000, Israel
E-mail: amnonf@tx.technion.ac.il

Paolo Gamba

Department of Electronics
University of Pavia, via Ferrata 1
27100 Pavia, Italy
E-mail: paolo.gamba@unipv.it

Andrea Garzelli

Department of Information Engineering
University of Siena
Via Roma, 56, 53100 Siena, Italy
E-mail: garzelli@dii.unisi.it

Tilotamma Ghosh

Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental
Sciences
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado 80309, USA
E-mail: Tilotama.Ghosh@noaa.gov

Susanne Grossman-Clarke

Global Institute of Sustainability
Arizona State University
Tempe, AZ, 85287-5302, USA
E-mail: sg.clarke@asu.edu

Haiyan Guan

Department of Geography and Environmental Management
University of Waterloo
200 University Avenue West
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1
E-mail: h6guan@uwaterloo.ca

Marcus Hedblom

Department of Ecology
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
PO Box 7044
SE-750 07, Uppsala, Sweden
E-mail: marcus.hedblom@ekol.slu.se

Uta Heiden

German Aerospace Center (DLR)
German Remote Sensing Data Center (DFD)
Münchener Strasse 20, 82234 Wessling, Germany
E-mail: Uta.Heiden@dlr.de

Wieke Heldens

German Aerospace Center (DLR)
German Remote Sensing Data Center (DFD)
Münchener Strasse 20, 82234 Wessling, Germany
E-mail: wieke.heldens@dlr.de

Jeffrey Hepinstall-Cymerman

Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources
University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia 30602, USA
E-mail: jhepinstall@warnell.uga.edu

James B. Holt

Division of Adult and Community Health
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Mailstop K-67, 4770 Buford Highway, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30341, USA
E-mail: jgh4@cdc.gov

Hermann Kaufmann

Helmholtz Centre Potsdam – GFZ
German Research Centre for Geosciences
Section 1.4 Remote Sensing
Telegrafenberg, 14473 Potsdam, Germany
E-mail: hermann.kaufmann@gfz-potsdam.de

Jonathan Li

Department of Geography and Environmental Management
University of Waterloo
200 University Avenue West
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1
E-mail: junli@uwaterloo.ca

Gianni Lisini

IUSS, Centre for Risk and Security
Via le Lungo Ticino Sforza 56
27100 Pavia, Italy
E-mail: gianni.lisini@unipv.it

Hua Lu

Division of Adult and Community Health
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Mailstop K-67, 4770 Buford Highway, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30341, USA
E-mail: hlu1@cdc.gov

Jeremy Mennis

Department of Geography and Urban Studies
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA 19122, USA
E-mail: jmennis@temple.edu

Victor Mesev

Department of Geography
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306, USA
E-mail: vmesev@fsu.edu

Ulla Mörtberg

Department of Land and Water Resources
Engineering
Royal Institute of Technology
SE-100 44 Stockholm, Sweden
E-mail: mortberg@kth.se

Soe W. Myint

School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning
Arizona State University
Tempe, AZ 85287, USA
E-mail: soe.myint@asu.edu

Daniel Orenstein

Center for Urban and Regional Studies
Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning
Technion – Israel Institute of Technology
Haifa 32000, Israel
Email: daniel.orenstein@gmail.com

Diego Polli

Department of Electronics
University of Pavia, via Ferrata 1
27100 Pavia, Italy
E-mail: diegoaldo.polli@unipv.it

Rebecca Powell

Department of Geography
University of Denver
Denver, Colorado 80208, USA
E-mail: rebecca.l.powell@du.edu

Sigrid Roessner

Helmholtz Centre Potsdam – GFZ
German Research Centre for Geosciences
Section 1.4 Remote Sensing
Telegrafenberg, 14473 Potsdam, Germany
E-mail: sigrid.roessner@gfz-potsdam.de

Karl Segl

Helmholtz Centre Potsdam – GFZ
German Research Centre for Geosciences
Section 1.4 Remote Sensing
Telegrafenberg, 14473 Potsdam, Germany
E-mail: karl.segl@gfz-potsdam.de

Massimo Selva

Institute of Applied Physics “Nello Carrara”
CNR Research Area of Florence
10 Via Madonna del Piano, 50019 Sesto F.no (FI), Italy
E-mail: m.selva@ifac.cnr.it

Elisabete A. Silva

Department of Land Economy and Fellow of Robinson College
University of Cambridge
19 Silver Street, Cambridge CB3 9EP, UK
E-mail: es424@cam.ac.uk

Mattia Stasolla

Department of Electronics
University of Pavia, via Ferrata 1
27100 Pavia, Italy
E-mail: mattia.stasolla@unipv.it

William L. Stefanov

Image Science & Analysis Laboratory/ESCG
NASA Johnson Space Center
Houston, TX 77058, USA
E-mail: william.l.stefanov@nasa.gov

Douglas Stow

Department of Geography
San Diego State University
San Diego, California 92182-4493, USA
E-mail: stow@mail.sdsu.edu

Daniel Z. Sui

Center for Urban & Regional Analysis
Department of Geography
The Ohio State University
Columbus, OH 43210, USA
E-mail: sui.10@osu.edu

Paul C. Sutton

Department of Geography
University of Denver
Denver, Colorado 80208, USA
E-mail: psutton@du.edu

Paul M. Torrens

Geosimulation Research Laboratory
School of Geographical Sciences & Urban Planning
Arizona State University
Tempe, AZ 85287-5302, USA
E-mail: torrens@geosimulation.com

Giovanna Trianni

Joint Research Centre, via Enrico Fermi 2749
21027 Ispra, Italy
E-mail: giovanna.trianni@jrc.ec.europa.eu

Benjamin T. Tuttle

Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado 80309, USA
E-mail: Ben.Tuttle@noaa.gov

Boud Verbeiren

Department of Hydrology and Hydraulic Engineering
Vrije Universiteit Brussel
Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels, Belgium
E-mail: bverbeir@vub.ac.be

Tim Van de Voorde

Cartography and GIS Research Unit
Department of Geography
Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

E-mail: tvdvoord@vub.ac.be

Le Wang

Department of Geography
University at Buffalo, State University of New York
Buffalo, NY 14261, USA
E-mail: lewang@buffalo.edu

Changshan Wu

Department of Geography
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Milwaukee, WI 53201, USA
E-mail: cswu@uwm.edu

Yichun Xie

Department of Geography and Geology
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197, USA
E-mail: yxie@emich.edu

Xiaojun Yang

Department of Geography
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306, USA
E-mail: xyang@fsu.edu

Xining Yang

Department of Geography
The Ohio State University
Columbus, OH 43210, USA
E-mail: xyang5@emich.edu

Fei Yuan

Department of Geography
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Mankato, Minnesota 56001, USA
E-mail: fei.yuan@mnsu.edu

Tingting Zhao

Department of Geography
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306, USA
E-mail: tzhao@fsu.edu

Joseph A. Zehnder

Department of Atmospheric Sciences
Creighton University
Omaha, NE 68178, USA
E-mail: zehnder@creighton.edu

Libin Zhou

Department of Geography
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306, USA
E-mail: lz06c@fsu.edu

Daniel Ziskin

Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado 80309, USA
E-mail: Daniel.Ziskin@noaa.gov

AUTHORS' BIOGRAPHY

Bruno Aiazzi is a Researcher of “Nello Carrara” Institute of Applied Physics, IFAC-CNR, Italy. His research interests include image processing of remote sensor data and environmental applications. He has published over 30 journal articles.

Stefano Baronti is a Researcher of “Nello Carrara” Institute of Applied Physics, IFAC-CNR, Italy. His research interests include image compression, processing of optical and SAR images, and image fusion. He has published nearly 50 journal articles.

Okke Batelaan is an Associate Professor of Eco-hydrology/GIS at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium and part-time Associate Professor of Hydrogeology at the K.U.Leuven. His research centers on distributed hydrological modeling of shallow subsurface and surface hydrological processes using GIS and remote sensing. He has published more than 100 papers.

Kimberly E. Baugh is an Associate Scientist with the Cooperative Institute of Research in the Environmental Sciences at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Her research focuses on processing and calibration of the night-time data from the DMSP OLS sensor.

Budhendra Bhaduri leads the Geographic Information Science & Technology group at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. His research centers on novel implementation of geospatial science and technology for sustainable development. He has published over 50 papers. He currently serves on the Mapping Sciences Committee of the National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council.

Mathias Bochow is a Research Scientist at the Remote Sensing Section, the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences. His research interests include imaging spectroscopy, image classification, and applied remote sensing.

Frank Canters is an Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Geography at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium. Since 2001 he has been a Visiting Professor in Geomatics at Ghent University. His main research interests are urban remote sensing, multisensor/multiresolution image analysis, modeling of spatial data uncertainty, and map projection design.

Luca Capobianco is with the Department of Earth Science at the University of Florence, Italy. His research focuses on several areas in remote sensing, especially kernel-based machine learning methods, information mining, multispectral and hyperspectral data analysis, SAR data processing, and data fusion.

Jose Luis Silvan-Cardenas was a Postdoctoral Scholar with the State University of New York at Buffalo. He is currently with the Geography and Geomatic Research Center in Mexico. His research centers on subpixel remote sensing and lidar data analysis.

Jarosław Chormański is an Assistant Professor in Hydrology and Water Resources, Warsaw University of Life Science, Poland. His research emphasizes the applications of geographic information systems and remote sensing in hydrology and hydrological modeling. He has published over 40 papers.

Fabio Dell'Acqua is an Assistant Professor of Remote Sensing at the University of Pavia, Italy. His research interests include synthetic aperture radar (SAR) data processing, earthquake damage assessment, and seismic vulnerability evaluation. He has published over 30 journal articles. He is an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Information Fusion*.

Christopher D. Elvidge leads the Earth Observation Group at NOAA's National Geophysical Data Center. He and his team have been developing the algorithms for constructing global maps of satellite observed nighttime lights since 1994. His current projects include satellite estimation of gas flaring volumes at oil production facilities in 60 countries and global mapping of the density of constructed surfaces.

Edward H. Erwin is a Physical Scientist with NOAA's National Geophysical Data Center. He processes and archives DMSP data and is responsible for the collection and historical preservation of various types of space weather data.

Amnon Frenkel is chair of the Graduate Program for Urban and Regional Planning at the Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology. He served as the secretary of the Israel Association of Planners and he is the Chair of the Israeli Section of the European Regional Science Association. His research interests include issues of urban and regional planning and technology policy with an emphasis on land use, urban sprawl, and diffusion of innovation in space.

Paolo Gamba is an Associate Professor of Telecommunications at the University of Pavia, Italy. His research centers on urban remote sensing. He has played a key role in organizing the Joint Urban Remote Sensing Event (JURSE). He has been invited to give keynote lectures in many international conferences. He has published more than 70 journal articles. He has served as Editor-in-Chief of the *IEEE Geoscience and Remote Sensing Letters* since 2009.

Andrea Garzelli is an Associate Professor of Telecommunications in the Department of Information Engineering at the University of Siena, Italy. His research interests are signal and image analysis, processing, and classification, including filtering, SAR image analysis, and image fusion for optical and radar remote-sensing applications. He has published over 150 papers.

Tilottama Ghosh is with NOAA National Geophysical Data Center (NGDC). Her research interests include human geography, remote sensing, and GIS. At NGDC, she is responsible for generating global mosaics of nighttime lights and performing socioeconomic analyses. She documents the DMSP algorithms and accomplishments through conference proceedings and journal submissions.

Susanne Grossman-Clarke is an Assistant Research Professor at Arizona State University. Her research emphasizes the improvement of the representation of urban areas in atmospheric models as well as the application of the latter to study the influence of urbanization on weather, climate, air quality and human comfort and health.

Haiyan Guan is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. Her research interests include lidar remote sensing, mobile mapping, and spatial modeling. She has published over 10 articles.

Marcus Hedblom leads the Swedish national monitoring program of urban landscapes, Urban NILS, in the Department of Ecology at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. His research concerns the development of methods to monitor biodiversity in urban areas, human perception of biodiversity, bird abundance in urban woodlands, and green corridors as movement conduits for butterflies.

Uta Heiden is a Research Scientist with the Department of Land Applications of the German Aerospace Center (DLR). Her research centers on the application of imaging spectroscopy for urban areas and brown fields. Currently, she is involved in the development of the ground segment for the forthcoming hyperspectral EnMAP satellite mission.

Wieke Heldens is a Research Scientist with the Department of Land Applications of the German Aerospace Center (DLR). Her research focuses on the application of hyperspectral remote sensing data to support urban planning and urban microclimate analysis.

Jeffrey Hepinstall-Cymerman is an Assistant Professor in the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources at the University of Georgia. His research centers on using geospatial data to model urban development and ecological phenomena including wildlife habitat and the effects of future urban development and climate change upon ecological systems.

James B. Holt is a Geographer at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. His research focuses on spatial analysis of public health data for epidemiology, public health policy, and program planning. He was instrumental in establishing the CDC Geography and Geospatial Science Working Group.

Hermann Kaufmann is Head of Department 1 – Geodesy and Remote Sensing of the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences and holds a chair at the University of Potsdam. His major scientific experiences are in the fields of data processing, sensor definition and applications dedicated to various disciplines. He is the scientific leader of the forthcoming EnMap hyperspectral satellite program.

Jonathan Li is Professor of Geomatics at the University of Waterloo, Canada. His research interests include remote sensing, mobile mapping, and geographic information systems. He has published five books and over 150 papers. He is Vice Chair of ICA Commission on Mapping from Satellite Imagery and Chair of ISPRS Intercommission Working Group V/I on Land-based Mobile Mapping Systems.

Gianni Lisini is with IUSS, Centre for Risk and Security, Pavia, Italy. His research centers on high-resolution SAR remote sensing of urban areas and the development of methods to extract different kinds of objects. He has published more than 50 articles.

Hua Lu is a Geographer at the Division of Adult and Community, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Her research interest centers on spatial analysis of public health data.

Jeremy Mennis is an Associate Professor of Geography and Urban Studies at Temple University. His research interests are in

geographic information science and its application in the social and health sciences. He has served as Chair of AAG Geographic Information Systems and Science Specialty Group and on the UCGIS Board of the Directors.

Victor Mesev is a Professor of Geography at Florida State University. His research focuses on the analytical interface between geographic information systems and remote sensing, particularly for measuring and modeling urban growth and density patterns. He is author of over 50 publications.

Ulla Mörtberg is an Assistant Professor in Land and Water Resources Engineering, Department of Land and Water Resources Engineering, Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden. Her research concerns urban landscape ecology, environmental systems analysis, and GIS-based spatial modeling.

Soe W. Myint is an Associate Professor in the School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning at Arizona State University. His research interests include remote sensor data analysis, geostatistical modeling, data mining, and pattern recognition. He currently serves as Chair of the Remote Sensing Specialty Group (RSSG) at the Association of American Geographers (AAG).

Daniel Orenstein is a Researcher with the Center for Urban and Regional Planning at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology. His research interests include population and environment interactions, environmental implications of urban spatial growth, and interdisciplinary approaches to long-term socioecological research.

Diego Aldo Polli is a doctoral student at the University of Pavia, Italy. His research interests include SAR data processing, earthquake damage assessment, and seismic vulnerability evaluation.

Rebecca L. Powell is an Assistant Professor of Geography at the University of Denver. Her research interests include applications of remote sensing to quantitatively assess ecological properties of land cover and to characterize the physical transformation of landscapes through time. In particular, her work has focused on characterizing urban ecosystems and vegetation structure in tropical savannas.

Sigrid Roessner is a Senior Research Scientist in the Remote Sensing Section at the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences. Her research interests include hyperspectral remote sensing of the urban environment and satellite remote sensing for natural hazard assessment.

Karl Segl is a Senior Research Scientist in the Remote Sensing Section at the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences. His research centers on methodological developments for hyperspectral data analysis, sensor design and validation.

Massimo Selva is with the Institute of Applied Physics “Nello Carrara” (IFAC-CNR) in Florence, Italy. His main scientific interests include multi-resolution image analysis, data fusion and image quality assessment.

Elisabete A. Silva is a University Lecturer in the Department of Land Economy and Fellow of Robinson College at the University of Cambridge. Her research centers on the application of new technologies to spatial urban planning. She is a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (FRICS).

Mattia Stasolla is a Research Engineer at the Microwave Laboratory, University of Pavia, Italy. Her research interests include radar and optical data processing, mathematical morphology, fuzzy rule-based classifiers, neural networks, and applied remote sensing for risk and crisis management.

William L. Stefanov is a Senior Geoscientist with the Image Science & Analysis Laboratory at NASA Johnson Space Center. His research interest is with the application of remote sensing in geological and ecological studies, with a particular focus on urban areas. He has published over 40 articles.

Douglas Stow is a Professor of Geography at San Diego State University (SDSU). His research centers land cover change analyses, particularly for Mediterranean-type and Arctic tundra ecosystems, and major cities of developing countries. He is the Co-Director of the Center for Earth Systems Analysis Research. He has published over 110 refereed articles.

Daniel Sui is a Professor of Geography, Distinguished Professor of Social & Behavioral Sciences and Director of the Center for Urban & Regional Analysis (CURA) at the Ohio State University. His research interests include GIS-based spatial analysis and modeling, volunteered geographic information, legal and ethical issues of using geospatial technologies in society. He has published 4 books and over 100 articles. He was a 2009 Guggenheim Fellow. He is also a current member of the US National Mapping Science Committee and serves as Editor-in-Chief for *GeoJournal*.

Paul C. Sutton is an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Denver. His research centers on the human–environment-sustainability problem. He has worked to demonstrate the potential of nighttime satellite imagery as a spatially explicit proxy measure of various human impacts on the environment.

Paul M. Torrens is an Associate Professor in the School of Geographical Sciences & Urban Planning at the Arizona State University. His research centers on GISci, development of geosimulation and geocomputation tools, applied modeling of complex urban systems, and new emerging cyberspaces. He earned a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers in 2008.

Giovanna Trianni is with the Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen, Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, Ispra, Italy. Her research centers on the use of optical and SAR satellite data to study the links between natural resources and armed conflicts and to analyze the damage caused by natural disasters.

Benjamin T. Tuttle is a doctoral student in the Department of Geography at the University of Denver. His research interests include human–environment interactions, the Geoweb, Cyberinfrastructure, and nighttime lights. His research has been published in various journals.

Boud Verbeiren is a doctoral researcher in the Department of Hydrology and Hydraulic Engineering at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium. His research centers on the use of GIS and remote sensing in hydrological modeling.

Tim Van de Voorde is a Researcher in the Department of Geography at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium. His research emphasizes the development of remote sensing for the study of urban land-use dynamics and environmental impacts of urbanization.

Le Wang is an Associate Professor of Geography at the State University of New York, Buffalo. His research centers on the use of remote sensing for population estimation, coastal mangrove mapping, and the study of the spread of invasive species. He has published more than 30 referred articles. He is the recipient of the 2008 Early Career Awards from the AAG Remote Sensing Specialty.

Changshan Wu is an Associate Professor of Geography at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His research interests include geographic information science and remote sensing with applications in urban development, population estimation, housing studies, and transportation analysis. He is the author of more than 20 papers.

Yichun Xie is a Professor of Geography and Founding Director of Institute for Geospatial Research and Education at Eastern Michigan University. His research centers on GISci, dynamic urban modeling, spatial decision support system, and China. He is the author of 1 book and over 80 papers. He is recipient of One Hundred Distinguished Overseas Scholars from the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Xiaojun Yang, Editor of this volume, is with the Department of Geography at Florida State University. His research focuses on the development of geospatial science and technologies to support geographic inquiries in urban and environmental domains. He has published over 80 articles. He currently serves as Chair of the Commission on Mapping from Satellite Imagery, International Cartographic Association.

Xining Yang is a PhD student in the Department of Geography, Ohio State University. His research interests include geography, computer science and statistics.

Fei Yuan is an Associate Professor at the Minnesota State University, Mankato. Her research interests include land use/cover change, urban growth monitoring, urban impervious mapping, and urban environmental analysis. Her research has been published in various journals.

Joseph A. Zehnder is a Professor of Atmospheric Science at Creighton University. His research centers on dynamic meteorology. He has published widely on the formation and motion of tropical cyclones, energetics of the air–sea interface and the urban boundary layer, and the transition from shallow to deep convection in continental tropical cumulus.

Tingting Zhao is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at Florida State University. Her research centers on spatial inventory of carbon emissions and vegetation carbon sinks; and assessment of human carbon impacts, especially from settlement development and energy consumption. Her research has been published in various journals.

Libin Zhou is a doctoral student in the department of Geography at Florida State University. Her research interests include GIS and remote sensing with applications in the urban environment.

Daniel C. Ziskin is a Research Associate with the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences at the University of Colorado. He is in the Earth Observing Group of the NOAA National Geophysical Data Center, enhancing the scientific value of the DMSP Nighttime Lights data set.

PREFACE

Remote sensing has traditionally been the colony of earth scientists and national security communities, and urban questions have been largely marginalized. With the recent innovations in data, technologies, and theories in the broad arena of Earth Observation, urban remote sensing, or urban applications of remote sensing, has rapidly gained the popularity across a wide variety of communities, such as urban planners, geographers, environmental scientists, and global change researchers. This surge of interest in urban remote sensing has been predominately driven by the need to derive critical urban information from remote sensing in support of various scientific inquiries and urban management activities.

The development of urban remote sensing has prompted much interest from the academics, and dedicated scholarly forums on urban remote sensing began to appear in 1995 when the European Science Foundation sponsored a specialist meeting on remote sensing and urban analysis. This meeting featured the research conducted by 16 invited scholars mostly from Europe, with a clear focus on interpreting urban physical structure and land use. This European-style urban remote sensing research framework has dominated the two subsequent major urban remote sensing forums: International Symposia on Remote Sensing of Urban Areas sponsored by the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) and Workshops on Remote Sensing and Data Fusion over Urban Areas jointly sponsored by Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society and ISPRS. Since 2005, the two forums have collocated to form a joint event that was officially named “Joint Urban Remote Sensing Event” in 2007.

In the United States, I began to organize special paper sessions on remote sensing and geographic information systems (GIS) for urban analysis at the annual meetings of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) since 2000. In addressing the multidisciplinary needs, several major areas have been identified as the session themes, including remote sensor data requirements for urban areas, development of digital image processing techniques for urban feature extraction, deriving urban socioeconomic indicators by remote sensing and spatial analysis, assessment of environmental consequences of urbanization by remote sensing, urban and landscape modeling using remote sensor data, urban change case studies, interface between remote sensing and urban geography, and urban remote sensing education. Sponsored by AAG Remote Sensing, GIS and Urban Geography Specialty Groups, these urban remote sensing conference sessions have been well received. More than 100 papers have been presented during the past 10 years, which featured the research conducted by some well-established urban remote sensing scholars, quite a few rising stars in urban remote sensing and GIS, as well as a large number of doctoral students predominately from U.S. universities. The Remote Sensing and GIS for Urban Analysis Special Paper Session has therefore become a major urban remote sensing forum in the United States.

The above forums have led to the publication of at least eight theme issues on urban remote sensing by virtually all major

remote sensing journals during the last decade, along with at least ten books with urban remote sensing as the subject. While urban remote sensing is rapidly emerging as a major field of study receiving more attention than ever, there was no book with a broad vision on urban remote sensing research that resembles the themes formulated by myself for the urban analysis special paper sessions. Most of the published books were restricted on extracting urban features and interpreting land use using various remote sensing systems and digital image processing techniques. They offer little insights on the synergistic use of remote sensing and relevant geospatial techniques for deriving socioeconomic and environmental indicators in the urban environment and for modeling the spatial consequences of past, current and future urban development.

Within the above context, a broad-vision book on urban remote sensing is timely. This book examines how the modern concepts, technologies, and methods in remote sensing can be effectively used to solve problems relevant to a wide range of topics extending beyond urban feature extraction into urban socioeconomic and environmental analyses and predictive modeling of urbanization. The book is divided into six major parts. The first part introduces a broad vision of urban remote sensing research that draws upon a number of disciplines to support monitoring, synthesis and modeling in the urban environment. The second and third parts review the advances in remote sensors and image processing techniques for urban attribute information extraction. The fourth and fifth parts showcase some latest developments in the synergistic use of remote sensing and relevant geospatial techniques for developing urban socioeconomic and environmental indicators. The last part examines the developments of remote sensing and dynamic modeling techniques for simulating and predicting urban growth and landscape changes.

This book is the result of extensive research by interdisciplinary experts, and will appeal to students, researchers and professionals dealing with not only remote sensing, geographic information systems and geocomputation but also urban planning, geography, environmental science and global change science. The Editor is grateful to all of those who contributed papers and revised their papers one or more times and those who reviewed papers according to my requests and timelines. The group of reviewers who contributed their time, talents, and energies is listed here: John Agnew, Li An, Gilad Bino, Alexander Buyantuyev, Jin Chen, Mang Lung Cheuk, Galina Churkina, Joshua Comenetz, Helen Couclelis, Mike de Smith, Manfred Ehlers, Michael Einede, Thomas Gillespie, Jack Harvey, John E. Hasse, Gary Higgs, Zhirong Hu, Minhe Ji, Xiaoyan Jiang, Byong-Woon Jun, Niina Käyhkö, Verda Kocabas, Mike Lackner, Chun-Lin Lee, Alexandre Leroux, Noam Levin, Peijun Li, Arika Ligmann-Zielinska, Yangrong Ling, Xiaohang Liu, Dengsheng Lu, Yasunari Matsuno, Xueliang Meng, David O’Sullivan, Fabio Pacifici, Amy Pocewicz, Ruiliang Pu, Dale Quattrochi, Tarek Rashed, Andrea Sarzynski, Conghe Song, Haider Taha, Junmei Tang, Céline Tison, Tim van de Voorde, Uwe Weidner, Cédric

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Xiaojun Yang
Tallahassee, Florida, USA
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INTRODUCTION

This introductory part discusses the rationale and motivation leading to the development of remote sensing for urban studies, emphasizing the need to adopt a broad vision on urban remote sensing research. It discusses some major benefits and possible challenges of using remote sensing for urban studies, and provides an overview on the book structure and a topic-by-topic preview. It also identifies several conceptual or technical areas that need further attentions.

1

What is urban remote sensing?

Xiaojun Yang

This introductory chapter defines the scope of urban remote sensing research. It begins with a discussion on the rationale leading to the development of remote sensing for urban studies and the motivation behind this book project emphasizing the need to adopt a broad vision on urban remote sensing research. It then discusses the benefits and possible challenges of using remote sensing for urban studies, followed by an overview of the major topics discussed in the book. Finally, the chapter highlights several areas that need further attention.

1.1 Introduction

Remote sensing is the art, science and technology of acquiring information about physical objects and the environment through recording, measuring and interpreting imagery and digital representations of energy patterns derived from noncontact sensors (Colwell, 1997). Remote sensing has traditionally been the colony of earth scientists and national security communities and urban questions have been largely marginalized (Sherbinin *et al.*, 2002).

With recent innovations in data, technologies, and theories in the wider arena of Earth Observation, urban remote sensing, or urban applications of remote sensing, has rapidly gained the popularity among a wide variety of communities. First, urban and regional planners are increasingly using remote sensing to derive information on the urban environment in a timely, detailed and cost-effective way to accommodate various planning and management activities (e.g., Sugumaran, Zerr and Prato, 2002; Alberti, Weeks and Coe, 2004; Mittelbach and Schneider, 2005; Santana, 2007; Bhatta, 2010). Second, more urban researchers are using remote sensing to extract urban structure information for studying urban geometry, which can help develop theories and models of urban morphology (e.g., Batty and Longley, 1994; Longley, 2002; Herold, Scepan and Clarke, 2002; Yang, 2002; Lo, 2004, 2007; Rashed *et al.*, 2005; Batty, 2008; Schneider and Woodcock, 2008). Third, environmental scientists are increasingly relying upon remote sensing to derive urban land cover information as a primary boundary condition used in many spatially distributed models (e.g., Lo, Quattrochi and Luvall, 1997; Lo and Quattrochi, 2003; Arthur-Hartranft, Carlson and Clarke, 2003; Carlson, 2004; Stefanov and Netzband, 2005; Hepinstall, Alberti and Marzluff, 2008). Lastly, the global change community has recognized remote sensing as an enabling and acceptable technology to study the spatiotemporal dynamics and consequences of urbanization as a major form of global changes (e.g., Bartlett, Mageean and O'Connor, 2000; Small and Nicholls, 2003; Auch, Taylor and Acededo, 2004; Small, 2005; Turner, Lambin and Reenberg, 2007; Grimm *et al.*, 2008), given the facts that more than half of the global population are now residing in cities (UN-HABITAT, 2010) and urban areas are the home of major global production and manufacture centers (Kaplan, Wheeler and Holloway, 2009).

The development in urban remote sensing has prompted much interest from academics, and dedicated scholarly forums on urban remote sensing began to appear in 1995 when the European Science Foundation (ESF) sponsored a specialist meeting on remote sensing and urban analysis as part of its GISDATA Programme. This meeting featured the research conducted by 16 invited scholars mostly from Europe, with the exception of Michael Batty and C.P. Lo. Batty, a British scholar and an urban modeling pioneer, was with the State University of New York at Buffalo (USA) during 1990–1995; Lo, a British-trained scholar and a pioneer in urban remote sensing, was with the University of Georgia (USA) from 1984 to 2007. The papers presented at the ESF-sponsored event largely centered on interpreting urban physical structure and land use (see Donnay, Barnsley and Longley, 2001). This European-style urban remote sensing research framework has dominated the two subsequent major urban remote sensing forums: International Symposia on Remote Sensing of Urban Areas (since 1979) sponsored by the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) and Workshops on Remote Sensing and Data Fusion

over Urban Areas (since 2001) jointly sponsored by Geoscience and Remote Sensing Society (GRSS) and ISPRS. Since 2005 the two forums have collocated to form a joint event that was officially named the “Joint Urban Remote Sensing Event (JURSE)” in 2007.

In the United States, the author began to organize special paper sessions on remote sensing and geographic information systems (GIS) for urban analysis at the annual meetings of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) since 2000. In addressing the multidisciplinary needs, several major areas have been identified as the session themes, which include remote sensor data requirements for urban areas, development of digital image processing techniques for urban feature extraction, deriving urban socioeconomic indicators by remote sensing and spatial analysis, assessment of environmental consequences of urbanization by remote sensing, urban and landscape modeling using remote sensor data, urban change case studies, interface between remote sensing and urban geography, and urban remote sensing education.

Sponsored by AAG’s Remote Sensing, GIS and Urban Geography Specialty Groups, these urban remote sensing conference sessions have been well received. More than 100 papers have been presented during the past 10 years, which featured the research conducted by some well-established urban remote sensing scholars, quite a few rising stars in urban remote sensing and GIS, as well as a large number of doctoral students predominately from American universities. The Remote Sensing and GIS for Urban Analysis Special Paper Session has therefore become a major urban remote sensing forum in the United States.

The above forums have led to the publication of at least eight theme issues on urban remote sensing by virtually all major remote sensing journals during the last decade, along with at least ten books with urban remote sensing as the subject (Yang, 2009). While urban remote sensing is rapidly emerging as a major field of study receiving more attention than ever, there was no any book with a broad vision on urban remote sensing research that resembles the themes formulated by the author for the urban analysis special paper sessions. Most of the published books were restricted to extracting urban feature and interpreting land use using various remote sensing systems and digital image processing techniques. They offer little insights on the synergistic use of remote sensing and spatial data analysis techniques for deriving socioeconomic and environmental indicators in the urban environment and for modeling the spatial consequences of past, current and future urban development.

Within the above context, a broad vision book on urban remote sensing research is timely. Designed for both the academic and business sectors, this book examines how the modern concepts, technologies and methods in remote sensing can be creatively used to solve problems relevant to a wide range of topics extending beyond urban feature extraction into two core inquiring areas in urban studies, i.e., urban socioeconomic and environmental analyses and predictive modeling of urbanization. Specifically, the book covers the following major aspects (Fig. 1.1):

- Introduces a broad vision of urban remote sensing research that draws upon a number of disciplines to support monitoring, synthesis and modeling in the urban environment;
- Reviews the advances in remote sensors and image processing techniques for urban attribute information extraction;
- Examines some latest developments in the synergistic use of remote sensing and other types of geospatial information for

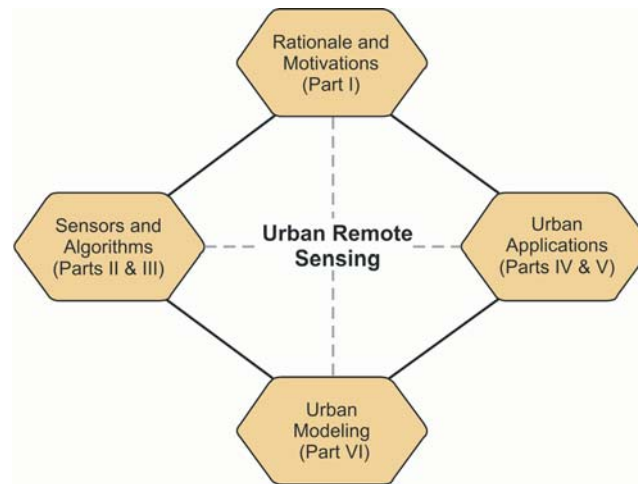


FIGURE 1.1 A graphic overview of the book structure.

developing urban socioeconomic and environmental indicators; and

- Examines the developments of remote sensing and dynamic modeling techniques for simulating and predicting urban growth and landscape changes.

In addition to scientific research, the book has incorporated a management component that can be particularly found in the chapters discussing urban socioeconomic and environmental analyses and predictive modeling or urbanization. Cutting-edge remote sensing research helps improve our understanding of the status, trends and threats in the urban environment; such knowledge is critical for formulating effective strategies towards sustainable urban planning and management.

Unlike most edited books with a contributing author pool from a single event, this book is written by a carefully selected group of interdisciplinary scholars:

- Researchers who presented a scholarly paper in an urban remote sensing session the author has organized at the annual meetings of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) since 2000;
- Researchers who recently presented a scholarly paper at a Joint Urban Remote Sensing Event;
- Some active researchers largely identified from their recent presentations at several other remote sensing conferences (e.g., annual meetings of American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing or International Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium); and
- A small number of other world-class scholars in remote sensing, geocomputation, urban studies, geography, and environmental science.

A total of 59 authors from Belgium, Canada, Germany, Israel, Italy, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States contribute to this book. Although this book is authored by US and European scholars with case studies predominantly drawn from North America and Europe, the knowledge gained from these two regions can be applied to other urban areas globally.

The sections to be followed will discuss the benefits and possible challenges of using remote sensing for urban studies, provide an overview of the major topics discussed in the book, and highlight several areas that need further research.

1.2 Remote sensing and urban studies

The technology of modern remote sensing began with the invention of the camera more than 150 years ago, and by now a wide variety of remote sensing systems has been developed to detect and measure energy patterns from different portions of the electromagnetic spectrum. Remote sensing can help improve our understanding of urban areas in several ways, although the realistic potential for making these improvements is often challenged by the complexity in the urban environment.

Remote sensing provides several major benefits for urban studies. First, perhaps the largest benefit of remote sensing is its capability of acquiring photos or images that cover a large area, providing a synoptic view that allows identifying objects, patterns, and human-land interactions. This unique perspective is highly relevant to the interdisciplinary approach we advocate to study the urban environment in this volume since many urban processes are operating over a rather large area; failure in observing the entire mosaic of an urban phenomenon may hinder our ability to understand the potential processes behind the observed patterns.

Second, remote sensing provides additional measures for urban studies. Urban researchers frequently use data collected from field surveys and measurements. This way of data collection is considered to be accurate but can introduce potential errors due to the bias in sampling design (Jensen, 2007). Field measurements can become prohibitively expensive over a large area. Remote sensing can collect data in an unbiased and cost-effectiveness fashion. Moreover, remote sensors can measure energy at wavelengths which are beyond the range of human vision; remote sensor data collected from the ultraviolet, infrared, microwave portions of the electromagnetic spectrum can help

obtain knowledge beyond our human visual perception. For example, thermal remote sensing can measure spatially continuous surface temperature that is useful to examine the urban heat island effect (e.g., Lo, Quattrochi and Luvall, 1997). Data fusion from different sensors can improve urban mapping and analysis (see Ch. 10).

Third, remote sensing allows retrospective viewing of Earth's surface, and time-series of remote sensor data can be used to develop a historical perspective of an urban attribute or process, which can help examine significant human or natural processes that act over a long time period. Examples in this volume include time-series land use/cover data that have been used to examine the suburbanizing process in the Atlanta metropolitan area over nearly the past four decades (Ch. 2); increasing gross primary production (GPP) that may be linked with vegetation carbon sequestration due to urban growth in the eastern United States (Ch. 19); historical land use changes affecting upon near-surface air temperature during recent extreme heat events in the Phoenix metropolitan area (Ch. 21); and urban growth and landscape changes affecting biodiversity in northern Washington (Ch. 25).

Fourth, remote sensing can help make connections across levels of analysis for urban studies. Urban science disciplines and subdisciplines have their own preferred levels of analysis and normally do not communicate across these levels. For example, urban planners tend to work at street and neighborhood levels; regional planners deal with a larger environment such as several counties, one or more metropolitan areas, or even a whole state; urban meteorologists and ecologists tend to work at levels defined by physiographical features or ecological units; and urban geographers tend to work at various levels depending upon specific topics under investigation. On the other hand, the temporal scales used by these different urban researchers vary greatly, from hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, seasonally, to annual or decadal basis. Remote sensing provides essentially global coverage of data with individual pixels ranging from submeters to a few kilometers and with varying temporal resolutions; such data can be combined to allow work at any scales or levels of analysis, appropriate to the urban phenomenon or process being examined. Therefore, remote sensing offers the potential for promoting urban researchers to think across levels of analysis and to develop theories and models to link these levels.

Last, remote sensing integrated with relevant geospatial technologies, such as geographic information systems, spatial analysis and dynamic modeling, offers an indispensable framework of monitoring, synthesis and modeling in the urban environment. Such frameworks support the development of a spatio-temporal perspective of urban processes or phenomena across different scales and the extension of historical and current observations into the future. They can also be used to relate different human and natural variables for developing an understanding of the indirect and direct drivers of urban changes and the potential feedbacks of such changes on the drivers in the urban environment.

Nevertheless, urban environments are complex by nature, challenging the applicability and robustness of remote sensing. The presence of complex urban impervious materials, along with a variety of croplands, grasslands and vegetation cover, causes substantial interpixel and intrapixel scenic changes, thus complicating the classification and characterization of urban landscape types. Moreover, it is always difficult to integrate remote sensor data with other types of geospatial data in urban

social or environmental analyses because of the fundamental differences in data sampling and measurement. Some additional challenges will be addressed in the sections to be followed.

1.3 Remote sensing systems for urban areas

Remote sensor data used for urban studies should meet certain conditions in terms of spatial, spectral, radiometric, and temporal characteristics (Jensen and Cowen, 1999). There is a wide variety of passive and active remote sensing systems acquiring data with various resolutions that can be useful for urban studies. Medium-resolution remote sensor data have been used to examine large-dimensional urban phenomena or processes since early 1970s when Landsat-1 was successfully launched. With the launch of IKONOS, the world's first commercial, high-resolution imaging satellite, on September 24 1999, very-high-spatial-resolution satellite imagery became available, which allow detailed work concerning the urban environment. Independent of weather conditions, active remote sensing systems, such as airborne or space-borne radar, can be particularly useful for such applications as housing damage assessment or ground deformation estimation in connection to some disastrous events in urban areas. Another active sensor system, similar in some respects to radar, is lidar (light detection and ranging), which can be used to derive height information useful for reconstructing three-dimensional city models.

With five major chapters, Part II of this volume reviews some major advances in remote sensors that are particularly relevant for urban studies. It begins with a chapter (Ch. 2) discussing the utilities of medium-resolution satellite remote sensing for the observation and measurement of urban growth and landscape changes, emphasizing the use of the data from the Landsat imaging sensors. Over a period of nearly four decades, the Landsat program has acquired a scientifically valuable image archive unmatched in quality, details, coverage, and length, which has been the primary source of data for urbanization studies at the regional, national and global scales. The chapter comprises a moderate review on the past, present and future of the Landsat program and its imaging sensors, a case study focusing on a rapidly suburbanizing metropolis, and an extended discussion on some conceptual and technical issues emerging when using archival satellite images acquired by different sensors and perhaps during different seasons.

The other four chapters within Part II review the utilities of high-resolution optical and radar remote sensing, hyperspectral remote sensing, and lidar remote sensing for urban feature extraction. Chapter 3 discusses some major challenges and limitations when using very-high-resolution optical satellite imagery for monitoring human settlements, including geometric, spectral, classification, and change detection problems. Then, the authors propose an integrated spatial approach to deal with some of these problems, which is followed by a discussion of some interesting results using very-high-resolution satellite imagery for building damage assessment in connection to major earthquake events. Chapter 4 reviews the methodological development of urban hyperspectral remote sensing emphasizing the progress in developing an automated system for mapping urban surface materials. This system comprises an iterative procedure that

involves field- and image-based spectral investigations to automatically derive quantitative spectral features that serve as the input information for a multi-step processing system. It allows detailed mapping of urban surface materials at a sub-pixel level and provides area-wide information about the fractional coverage of surface materials for each pixel. Chapter 5 discusses some new possibilities and challenges when using very-high-resolution spaceborne radar data for urban feature extraction. The authors compare airborne versus spaceborne radar data in terms of image geometry and other aspects that have been elaborated in connection to single building extraction, building damage assessment, and vulnerability mapping. They also discuss the suitability of adopting the algorithms and methods originally developed for processing high-resolution airborne radar data to spaceborne radar data. The last chapter (Ch. 6) included in Part II discusses the use of lidar remote sensing for three-dimensional building reconstruction. The chapter comprises a moderate review on lidar-based building extraction techniques and a detailed discussion on a comprehensive approach for automated creation of three-dimensional building models from airborne lidar point cloud data fused with aerial imagery.

1.4 Algorithms and techniques for urban attribute extraction

The urban environment is characterized by the presence of heterogeneous surface covers with large interpixel and intrapixel spectral variations, thus challenging the applicability and robustness of conventional image processing algorithms and techniques. Largely built upon parametric statistics, conventional pattern classifiers generally work well for medium-resolution scenes covering spectrally homogeneous areas, but not in heterogeneous regions such as urban areas or when scenes contain severe noises due to the increase of image spatial resolution. Developing improved image processing algorithms and techniques for working with different types of remote sensor data has therefore become a very active research area in urban remote sensing. For years, various strategies have been developed to improve urban mapping, and some of the most exciting developments are discussed in Part III.

The first three chapters in Part III are dedicated to a set of image processing techniques that can be used to improve urban mapping performance at the per-pixel, sub-pixel, or object levels. The first chapter (Ch. 7) discusses some algorithmic parameters affecting the performance of artificial neural networks in image classification at the per-pixel level. The chapter comprises a moderate review on the basic structure of neural networks, two focused studies with a satellite image covering an urban area to assess the sensitivity of image classification by neural networks in relation to various internal parameter settings and the performance of several training algorithms in image classification, and a discussion on a generic framework that can guide the use of neural networks in remote sensing. Chapter 8 reviews the spectral mixture analysis (SMA) technique that allows the decomposition of each pixel into independent endmembers or pure materials to map urban subpixel composition. It then discusses two case studies highlighting the flexibility of multiple endmember spectral

mixture analysis (MESMA) to map vegetation, impervious and bare soil components. Chapter 9 provides an overview on the principles of object-based image analysis (OBIA) and demonstrates how the OBIA can be applied to achieve satisfactory urban mapping accuracy. Two case studies are conducted with Quickbird data to demonstrate two object-based analysis procedures, namely, decision rule and nearest neighbor classifiers.

The last two chapters included in Part III deal with two important aspects for urban mapping: image fusion technique (Ch. 10) and temporal lag between urban structure and function (Ch. 11). Chapter 10 reviews some advanced pan-sharpening algorithms and discusses their performance in terms of objective and visual quality. Chapter 11 examines the issue of temporal lag between when decisions are made to change a city to when these changes actually physically materialize. This seems to be an important issue for urban mapping. Yet it has been largely neglected in urban remote sensing literatures. The author explores the temporal lag largely from a conceptual perspective.

It should be noted that there are some other urban mapping techniques or methods that have been discussed in other chapters of this volume. For example, Chapter 2 (Part II) discusses a hybrid approach combining unsupervised classification and spatial reclassification that has been successfully used to produce accuracy-compatible land use/cover maps from a decades-long time series of satellite imagery acquired by the three Landsat imaging sensors. Chapter 3 discusses a filtering step built upon the use of some operators of mathematical morphology as part of an integrated adaptive spatial approach that can be used to improve urban mapping from very-high-resolution remote sensor data. Finally, due to the space limit, we are not able to cover some other pattern classification techniques that can be used to improve urban mapping, such as expert systems (e.g., Stefanov, Ramsey and Christensen, 2001), support vector machines (e.g., Yang, 2011), or a fuzzy classifier (e.g., Shalan, Arora and Ghosh, 2003). Readers who are interested in learning more about these methods should refer to the references provided.

1.5 Urban socioeconomic analyses

Applying remote sensing to urban socioeconomic analyses has been an expanding research area in urban remote sensing. There are two major types of such analyses. The first type centers on linking socioeconomic data to land use/cover change data derived from remote sensing in order to identify the drivers of landscape changes (e.g., Lo and Yang, 2002; Seto and Kaufmann, 2003). The other type of analyses focuses on developing indicators of urban socioeconomic status by combined use of remote sensing and census or field-survey data (e.g., Lo and Faber, 1997; Yu and Wu, 2006). While some aspects relating to the first type of analyses will be addressed in Part VI, here we focus on some latest developments in the second type of urban socioeconomic analyses.

Part IV examines some latest developments in the synergistic use of remote sensing and other types of geospatial information for developing urban socioeconomic indicators. It begins with a chapter (Ch. 12) discussing a pluralistic approach to defining and measuring urban sprawl. This topic is included as part of urban socioeconomic analyses because defining urban sprawl involves

not only urban spatial characteristics but also socioeconomic conditions such as population density and transportation. The chapter reviews the literature and debates on the definition of urban sprawl, emphasizing common themes in definitions and those measurable spatial characteristics that would be of specific interest to the remote sensing community. It shows that sprawl can be described by multiple quantitative measures but different sprawl measures can yield contradictory outcomes. The chapter suggests that sprawl should be best defined for a given case study and quantified using different indicators that can accommodate the researcher's definition of sprawl, spatial scale of analysis, and specific characteristics of the study site.

The remaining four chapters in Part IV focus on population estimation (Ch. 13), dasymetric mapping (Ch. 14), electrification rate estimation (Ch. 15), and environmental justice research (Ch. 16). Chapter 13 discusses a method for small area population estimation by combined use of high-resolution imagery with lidar data. This type of information is critical for decision-making by both public and private sectors but is only available for one date per decade. The work has provided an alternative that can be used to derive reliable population estimation in a timely and cost-effective fashion. Chapter 14 reviews various areal interpolation techniques emphasizing dasymetric mapping, followed by an example in which population estimates and sociodemographic data are derived for different spatial units by using dasymetric mapping methods that rely upon ancillary data from a variety of sources including satellite imagery. Chapter 15 discusses a method that has been developed to estimate the global percent population having electric power access based on the presence of satellite detected night-time lighting. The satellite-derived results are pretty close to the reported electrification rates by the International Energy Agency. The last chapter (Ch. 16) included in Part IV discusses the role of remote sensing for urban environmental justice research. The chapter comprises a review on the principles and issues in environmental justice research, a case study investigating the relationship between a satellite-derived vegetation index and indicators of race and socioeconomic status in Philadelphia, and a discussion on some issues that need further research.

1.6 Urban environmental analyses

Although urban areas are quite small relative to the global land cover, they significantly alter hydrology, biodiversity, biogeochemistry, and climate at local, regional, and global scales (Grimm *et al.*, 2008). Understanding environmental consequences of urbanization is a critical concern to both the planning (Alberti, Weeks and Coe, 2004) and global change science communities (Turner, Lambin and Reenberg, 2007). Urban environmental analyses can help understand the status, trends, and threats in urban areas so that appropriate management actions can be planned and implemented. This is a research area in which remote sensing can play a critical role.

Part V (Chs 17–21) reviews the latest developments in the synergistic use of remote sensing and relevant geospatial techniques for urban environmental analyses. Chapter 17 discusses a remote

sensing approach to high-resolution urban impervious surface mapping. This topic is included as part of urban environmental analyses because landscape imperviousness has recently emerged as a key indicator being used to address a variety of urban environmental issues such as water quality, biodiversity of aquatic systems, habitat structure, and watershed health (Yang and Liu, 2005). The chapter reviews some major pixel-based and object-based techniques for impervious surface estimation, and compares the performance of the two groups of methods with case studies.

The other chapters included in Part V deal with urban hydrological processes (Ch. 18), vegetation carbon sequestration (Ch. 19), biodiversity (Ch. 20), and air quality and climate (Ch. 21). Chapter 18 discusses the impact of different remote sensing methods for characterizing the distribution of impervious surfaces on runoff estimation, and how this can affect the assessment of peak discharges in an urbanized watershed. The study shows that detailed information on the spatial distribution of impervious surfaces strongly affects local runoff estimation and has a clear impact on the modeling of peak discharges. Chapter 19 reviews the light-use efficiency (LUE) models and applied them to estimate gross primary production (GPP) in the eastern United States in two different years. The estimated GPP was associated with various settlement densities. The LUE-based vegetation productivity estimates may be integrated with carbon emissions data, thus providing a comprehensive view of net carbon exchange between land and the atmosphere due to urban development. Chapter 20 discusses the utilities of remote sensing for characterizing biodiversity in urban areas, how urbanization affects biodiversity, and how remote sensing-based biodiversity research can be integrated with urban planning and management for biodiversity conservation. The last chapter (Ch. 21) in Part V reviews the existing literature concerning the influence of urban land use/cover changes on urban meteorology, climate and air quality. This is followed by a case study focusing on the Phoenix metropolitan area to demonstrate how remote sensing can be used to study the effect of historic land use changes on near-surface air temperature during recent extreme heat events.

1.7 Urban growth and landscape change modeling

A group of important activities in urban studies is to understand urban dynamics and to assess future urban growth impacts on the environment. There are two major types of models that can be used to support such activities: analytical models that are useful to explain urban expansion and evolving patterns as well as dynamic models that can be used to predict future urban growth and landscape changes. Here we direct our attention to the second type of models because of their predictive power that can be used to imagine, test and assess the spatial consequences of urban growth under specific socioeconomic and environmental conditions. The role of remote sensing is indispensable in the entire model development process from model conceptualization to implementation that includes input data preparation, model calibration, and model validation (Lo and Yang, 2002; Yang and Lo, 2003).